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Agenda item 5 (c)
High-level segment: annual ministerial review

Statement submitted by OceanCare, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08589 (E) 090615

Please recycle

Statement

The future of humanity is linked to healthy oceans. Over fishing, chemical and noise pollution are already undermining marine biodiversity and threatening food security for millions of people. These impacts are compounded by climate change and ocean acidification.

Transitioning to the sustainable development goals should mean conscious action, and decisions in the present to limit harm in the future.

By its very nature, the petroleum exploration industry works against this goal. Greenhouse gas emissions contained in present estimates of global fossil fuel reserves are already three times higher than can be used if global temperatures are not to exceed 2 degrees centigrade. Yet, the petroleum exploration industry ambition is to increase fossil fuel use into the future.

Facilitating this industry to explore for new reserves in offshore areas has an even more profound impact because it harms the present as well. Offshore petroleum exploration is a major ocean noise producer.

For more than a decade OceanCare has raised concern about ocean noise pollution through intergovernmental meetings, urging governments and the United Nations to take action to reduce ocean noise.

In some areas ocean noise levels, from petroleum exploration, shipping and high intensity military sonar, have doubled every decade for the past 60 years, posing significant threat to marine life and ecosystems. Ocean noise is impacting at least 55 marine species including 20 commercially valuable species, including perch, snapper, cod, haddock and bluefin tuna. Studies show that intense noise generated by offshore petroleum exploration can decrease commercial fish catch rates by 80 percent. Catch rates do not readily recover from these surveys. This has critical socioeconomic repercussions on fisheries, fisher people, the global food supply and undermines global marine biodiversity.

The United Nations General Assembly has acknowledged this through the annual resolution on sustainable fisheries and has encouraged the Food and Agricultural Organisation to investigate the link between ocean noise, decreased catch rates and socioeconomic impacts.

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity recently agreed to the need to conduct thorough and detailed environmental impact assessments before approving marine noise generating activities. (Decision XII/23).

Transitioning to the sustainable development goals will take informed, coordinated and conscious decisions to limit harm. All agencies can be responsive to the need for coordinated and responsive action. All governments can consciously implement thorough environmental impact assessments as a prerequisite before approving any offshore noise industries to proceed. Transparently comparing the risks of fossil fuel development to renewable energy infrastructure should make decisions clear.

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Statement submitted by Roshd Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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15-08590 (E) 090615

Please recycle

Statement

Non-governmental organizations have been engaged with the United Nations in achieving poverty eradication and ending hunger, inclusive and equitable education and gender equality.

Because of the nature of the non-governmental organizations, there should be a bilateral approach. It means that the information and facts about the problems in deprived areas can be provided by non-governmental organizations to authorities and governments and also the non-governmental organizations could introduce sustainable development goals to people for more awareness about the facts. In addition, they can assist by holding charity festivals and contributing food and essential items among poor families, which can be accomplished by their volunteers as what Roshd Foundation did at its programs and voluntary expeditions to deprived areas. Furthermore terrorist activities as one of the main reason of hunger and poverty in the world must be prevented by countries and United Nations which can be impressive in achievement of that goals.

On the other hand, there is no opportunity for education for families in deprived areas because of lack of educational equipment and schools. In fact the propensity of learning is disappeared. Therefore for solving those problems, non-governmental organizations should be active in those areas and the promotion of quality of education and long-term learning should be considered by them by providing equipment and building schools in those areas. And the participation of their volunteers is required for efficiency of education. For instance, more than 22 schools in poor villages of Iran have been built by Roshd Foundation. Furthermore providing e-learning and educational websites is a good way to achieving inclusive and equitable education.

In addition, half of each society is contained by women and girls. So if their talents are not identified, at least half of capacity of growth and development will remain inactive. Great capacities could be activated by making gender equality and elimination of discrimination in intellectual and social structures of the societies. One of the solution for achieving equality is improving culture and featuring role of women as the mothers who are trainers of next generations. Furthermore providing opportunity of education for girls can be considered as another solution.

Finally collaboration of non-governmental organizations and the United Nation can be impressive for achievement of sustainable development goals. Also providing education can be effective in reaching to some other purposes. Furthermore participation of volunteers is necessary for it.

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Statement submitted by Islamic Research and Information Artistic and Cultural Institute, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08591 (E) 090615

Please recycle

Statement

Education is a powerful driver of development, which has influential impact on improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability. Primary education as a critical component of an educational system on elimination of poverty, which is mentioned as the first Millennium Development Goal is undeniable.

It is noteworthy to point that education of children is not limited to the information and facts they are expected to learn. The emotional, social and physical well-being of the students are mentioned as the key factors in primary education systems.

Although free primary school for all children is a fundamental right, unfortunately, there are still millions of children left to enrol in schooling worldwide.

Children of indigenous populations or ethnic minorities and also children with disabilities often face discrimination and are excluded from education.

These problems will impact on the progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It seems that for solving these problems educational, religious and political leaders in all nations should take bold steps to provide all of their children free basic education. Although financing for the poorest countries, eliminating school fees, building schools in villages and creating education systems will be helpful too.

Islam as a divine religion also emphasized the influence of both education and poverty reduction in acquiring peace and happiness in life. This emphasis is to the extent that the Prophet of Islam says "Seeking of knowledge is a duty of every Muslim". He said that the scholars are the heirs of the Prophets and that the Prophets did not leave behind any money, rather their inheritance was knowledge.

In order to reduce poverty also, Islam came with the most just and easy solution through several methods such as The Obligatory Zakat, which is a certain "tax" on people's accumulated wealth to be distributed among the poor and optional charity in different situations. According to Islamic perspective, knowledge is a prerequisite for the creation of a just world. In the case of country's disorder or war the Quran emphasizes the importance of the pursuit of learning. No man becomes truly a Muslim without knowing the meaning of Islam, because he becomes a Muslim not through birth but through knowledge.

Acquiring knowledge is identified in Islam as worship. The practice of knowledge is connected with ethics and morality with promoting virtue and combating vice.

Hence we believe that the religious leaders have an important role to encourage the believers to eradicate the illiteracy and to encourage them to distribute their wealth among the poor people.

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Statement submitted by International Council of Nurses, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

The International Council of Nurses is pleased that significant progress has been made across all goals and millions of lives have been saved in the global efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. As clearly documented, nurses are an integral part of this progress.

At this time of transition to the sustainable development goals, we would like to highlight the need for a more system-wide investment with primary focus on health promotion and prevention of illness and other unhealthy conditions. While setting the Millennium Development Goals successfully mobilized global resources to reduce mortality from the targeted diseases and among specific groups, we have seen the inefficiencies of this approach such as service duplication and fragmentation. As countries are accelerating efforts towards universal health coverage, there is a clear need for strong, well-equipped and well-staffed health-care systems in order to continuously provide good quality health-care services to all people in need.

In addition, the International Council of Nurses supports the intersectoral actions to health. Nurses are the frontline responders to a range of health problems as a result of factors that are beyond health sector control. We believe that health must be considered in non-health goals including poverty, nutrition, water and sanitation, environment, education, human rights, gender and equity, disaster risk reduction and transport.

Nurses' contributions to achieving global development goals include both at the point of care and at the policy decision-making table. As prime health-care service providers, nurses can provide quantitative and qualitative data to inform evidence-based policy development. To ensure smooth transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, and to keep the momentum and accelerate the efforts to achieve health for all, the International Council of Nurses encourages the involvement of nurses both in health and non-health policy design, planning and implementation at national, regional and international levels.